UNITED NATIONS

Convention to Combat Desertification

Distr.
GENERAL

ICCD/COP(3)/12/Add.1
25 October 1999

ENGLISH ONLY

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Third session
Recife, 15-26 November 1999
Item 10(c) of the provisional agenda

GLOBAL MECHANISM

REVIEW OF THE REPORT BY THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT ON ITS COLLABORATION WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER INTERESTED ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Note by the secretariat

Addendum

1. By its decision 18/COP.2, the Conference of the Parties (COP) invited the International Fund for Agricultural Development to pursue modalities of collaboration between itself and the community of non-governmental organizations, as well as with other interested organizations, including the private sector, and to submit a report to the Conference of the Parties at its third session. This report is contained in document ICCD/COP(3)/12.

2. The secretariat hereby submits an addendum[1]/ to the above-mentioned report received from the International Fund for Agricultural Development for consideration by the COP.

1/ Reproduced without formal editing by the Convention secretariat.

DETAILS OF UNCCD RELEVANT PROJECTS IN IFAD's CURRENT PORTFOLIO

In implementing its programmes in marginal areas, IFAD has mobilized non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as and when appropriate, selected examples of which are noted below. Projects approved from 1997 to date of relevance to the UNCCD include:

Senegal Village Management and Development Project (US$ 13.401 m and IFAD loan US$ 9.488 m). With precipitation in the project area in the northern part of the Groundnut Basin averaging only 200 to 350 mm/year, insufficient and irregular rainfall is the most serious constraint facing the rural population. Rainfed farming is thus highly unpredictable. The vegetation cover is degraded in certain over-exploited zones. The main long-term objective is to establish a durable, self-sustaining development that increases food security and rural income and prevents rural out-migration. The Project Coordination and Monitoring Unit will sub-contract all technical activities to partner institutions including NGOs.

Madagascar Second Environment Program Support (total cost US$ 155 m and IFAD loan amount US$ 8.1 m). Poverty and a low level of agricultural technology (slash-and-burn agriculture) compounded by a rapid population growth of 3 % per year are the main causes of natural resources degradation, threatening not only the high endemic biodiversity but also triggering deforestation and soil erosion. The three key objectives are: 1) reduce environmental degradation ; 2) promote sustainable natural resource use, including soil, water, forest cover and biodiversity; and 3) integrate environmental considerations within the macro-economic context. The direct beneficiaries are the most chronically food-insecure and landless households. To obtain full consensus on strategies and priorities, international NGOs have worked jointly with the Malagasy agencies.

Agro-Forestry Project to Combat Desertification in Senegal (total project cost US$ 13.9 m and IFAD loan amount US$ 8.2 m) was passed by the Board in December 1998. The area, located in the heart of the Groundnut Basin, has a hot, dry Sudano-Sahelian climate, with an average annual rainfall of 400 mm over a total of 30 days. Extreme year-to-year variations in rainfall and water scarcity are responsible for deterioration of vegetal cover, loss of soil fertility through wind erosion, and an alarming rate of desertification in many places, prompting a temporary and permanent out-migration of crop farmers and livestock herders from their villages. To prevent the vicious circle of resource degradation and poverty, the project aims toward a durable, participatory, self-sustaining development through disseminating proven, simple agro-forestry technologies to improve soil fertility and productivity in conjunction with capacity-building, institutional strengthening and improved rural infrastructure. Technological innovations would duly incorporate traditional knowledge in terms of, for instance, environmentally sound cropping practices.

Syria Badia Rangelands Development Project (total cost US$ 104.92 m and IFAD loan US$ 20.2 m) approved on 23 April 1998, was aimed at establishing and implementing a replicable, participatory methodology for Sustainable Natural Resources Management. It marks the first large-scale integrated operation to improve the well-being of the Bedouin Community.

Egypt Sohag Rural Development Project (total project cost US$ 93.753 m and IFAD loan US$ 24.997 m) was passed by the Board on 10 September 1998. The desert-like climate of the Governorate of Sohag, located in middle Upper Egypt, provided irrigation, lends itself well to a wide range of crops. The primary objective is to increase incomes and quality of life of 210,000 households by way of sustainable rural development. The Sohag project will collaborate with small, indigenous NGOs as well as large, national and international ones to mobilize local resources, provide services and train beneficiary institutions. NGOs will be represented in the regional Steering Committee. Long-term impact evaluation will be conducted through annual beneficiary assessments with the assistance of NGOs.

Smallholder Irrigation Support Programme in Zimbabwe (total project cost US$ 19.33 m and IFAD loan US$ 12.12 m) was passed by the Board in September 1998. Inadequate and unreliable rainfall and the recurrent threat of drought in the dry areas of Zimbabwe restrict the potential of rainfed agriculture on which the livelihoods of most smallholder farmers depend. Water shortage, the most serious and common problem, seriously threatens Household Food Security and constrains marketing of the local produce. The objective is to sustainably increase incomes and food security of the irrigating smallholder households. The participatory approach would ensure a gradual transfer of irrigation system management to the farmers themselves. The Programme is implemented through existing technical support services of the government, with provision for the contracting of additional services from the private sector and NGOs, where appropriate.

Ethiopia Agricultural Research and Training Project (total cost US$ 90.642 m and IFAD loan US$ 18.158 m) was passed by the Board on 10 September 1998. Recurring droughts, a lack of improved production technologies, and poor farming practices causing declining soil fertility, low productivity and land degradation are partly to blame for a food-deficit situation. It seeks to strengthen the resilience of smallholder farmers in the poorest rural households to drought and famine by extending the coverage of agricultural research to neglected, isolated, drought-prone agro-ecological zones, undergoing significant natural resource degradation. Home to a high concentration of especially poor and vulnerable households, the generation and adoption of ecologically-sound post-harvest and production technologies will increase productivity per land unit, improving Household Food Security and farmer incomes, while minimizing pressure on marginal lands. The Ethiopian Agricultural Research Organization (EARO), responsible for overall project implementation, in reviewing the annual performance of each research programme, will share its findings with a wide community of stakeholders including NGOs.

Lesotho Sustainable Agricultural Development Programme for the Mountain Areas (total project cost US$ 10.9 m and IFAD loan US$ 8.4 m) was passed by the Board on 10 September 1998. Poverty in the mountains is attributed to agro-ecology unsuited to crop production coupled with a limited and degraded natural resource base in terms of accelerated soil erosion from a depleted vegetative cover on account of high livestock stocking rate and overgrazing. The main objectives are: 1) to improve household food security and nutritional status of 45 % of the poorest people in 3 mountain districts, laying emphasis on beneficiary participation and 2) increase household farm incomes through crop diversification, rangeland stabilization, improved livestock production and a unified agricultural extension service oriented toward smallholder farmers. Village Headman's Workshops, organized by District Programme Officers, will be attended by NGO representatives to formulate development initiatives and activity budgets, based on principal needs and priorities of the beneficiaries.

Mali Sahelian Areas Development Fund Programme (total cost US$ 46 m and IFAD loan US$ 22 m), passed by the Board on 2 December 1998, is the first IFAD-supported operation under the new Flexible Lending Mechanism (FLM), introduced in September 1998. The Sahelian ecology entails extreme vulnerability to fluctuations in food production in the face of persistent drought and desertification. Land degradation and marginalization are responsible for food insecurity and low, uncertain incomes in the Sahelian areas of Mali. The ultimate goal is to reduce poverty among rural households through improved incomes and living conditions. Beneficiaries would be empowered to identify their own priority needs. At the end of the FLM period, achievements would be consolidated and an appropriate exit strategy implemented to ensure project sustainability. Regional Associations will be established in each region to oversee programme activities, comprising of, among others, representatives of local and foreign NGOs.

Tunisia Integrated Agricultural Development Project in the Governorate of Zaghouan (total project cost US$ 33.6 m and IFAD loan amount US$ 16.1 m) was approved by the Board on 3 December 1998. The project area is located in the country's semi-arid zone with an average annual rainfall of 300-450 mm and large inter-annual variations. Uncontrolled grazing and soil erosion on the hillsides have been causing rapid rangeland degeneration. Its aim is to bring about increased, more stable and diversified income through sustainable productivity increase based on developing local-level capacity to plan, maintain and manage Soil and Water Conservation investments. The Project Management Unit will oversee the *Community Development and Promotion of Rural Women* component with the support of, among others, NGOs.

Sudan North Kordofan Rural Development Project It bears mention that the design of this project (total cost US$ 23.7 m and IFAD loan US$ 10.5 m), passed by the Board on 28 April 1999, was specifically aimed at promoting communal natural resources management toward increased, sustainable utilization and therefore increased resilience to drought and natural disaster. Consultation and participation of beneficiaries are emphasized.

Community Resources Management Project in the Sultanate of Oman The project (total cost US$ 38.1 m and IFAD loan US$ 5.2 m), was passed by the Board in December 1998. Crop production in the project area is entirely dependent on irrigation from limited groundwater resources. Seriously declining water tables threaten the already low agricultural productivity. The project is primarily aimed at sustainable agricultural cropping systems based on: 1) a balance between groundwater abstraction and recharge; and 2) improved returns from irrigation water. The project represents an innovative approach to water catchment management through community self-help, government services re-oriented from input delivery and subsidy administration toward an educational and advisory role as change agents.

Sustainable Development Project for Agrarian Reform Settlements in the Semi-Arid North-East, Brazil was passed by the Board on 3 December 1998. The area is characterized by a 6-7 month dry season, with severe regional droughts occurring every 7-10 years, restricted water supply, poor quality soils and lack of access to available production technologies adapted to semi-arid conditions. The project is aimed at sustainable improvement of social and economic condition of poor "agrarian reform" settlers and neighbouring smallholders through participatory on-farm testing and validation of such technologies coupled with water storage and management.

Upper-East Region Land Conservation and Smallholder Rehabilitation Project in Ghana is one particular example of IFAD's investment in Environmentally Sound Good Practices, Phase 1 of which was completed at the end of 1997. A second phase (total project cost US$ 15.039 m and IFAD SPA loan US$ 12.539 m), approved on 29 April 1999, is aimed at empowering rural populations to: 1) access improved productivity-enhancing technology, irrigation services and credit so as to increase and stabilize their farm incomes; and 2) develop social infrastructure toward improved living conditions and the environment. Beneficiary communities would receive technical assistance through a demand-driven participatory approach, ensuring long-term sustainability.

The following project has reached an advanced stage of design so as to be presented to one of the forthcoming sessions the Executive Board.

The ***Participatory Irrigation Development Programme in Tanzania*** is aimed at improving Household Food Security and smallholder incomes by strengthening technical and institutional capacity of farmers, private sector, NGOs and civil society organizations toward developing smallholder irrigation throughout marginal areas of the country's Central Plateau.